

Applicants: Robert E. Richardson Jr. *et al.*
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REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 6-9, 20 and 23-25 are cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, and the specification and claims 1, 10-12, 14 and 21 are amended. Claims 7-9 and 23-25 were withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected Species. Accordingly, claims 1-5, 10-19, 21, 22 and 26-30 are pending in this application. No new matter is added by any of these amendments.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge that the Final Office Action indicates that claim 10 is allowed, and that claims 6 and 20 contain allowable subject matter. As such, Applicants amend claims 1 and 14 to recite the features of claims 6 and 20, respectively. In addition, Applicants amend claims 11 and 12 to also recite the features of claim 6, and amend claim 21 to recite the features of claim 20. Further, claim 10 is amended to correct minor informalities, having no effect on patentability.

Reconsideration based on the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Amendment Entry After Final Rejection

Entry of this amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 because the amendments: a) place the application in condition for allowance for all the reasons discussed herein; b) do not raise any new issues requiring further search or consideration; c) place the application in better condition for appeal if necessary; and d) address formal requirements of the Final Rejection and preceding Office Action.

The foregoing amendments do not raise any new issues after Final Rejection. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of this Amendment.

II. Obviousness Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Final Office Action rejects claims 1, 11, 12, 14, 21 and 26-30 as being allegedly obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent 5,124,662 to Downing *et al.* ("Downing") in view of U.S. Patent 5,667,565 to Gondar. The Final Office Action further rejects claims 2 and 16 as being allegedly obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Downing in view of Gondar and U.S. Patent 3,603,875 to Coulter *et al.* ("Coulter"); rejects claims 3 and 17 as being allegedly

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obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Downing in view of Gondar and U.S. Patent 6,263,744 to Russell *et al.* ("Russell"); rejects claims 4, 5, 18 and 19 as being allegedly obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Downing in view of Gondar, Russell and U.S. Patent 4,015,464 to Miller *et al.* ("Miller"); and rejects claims 13, 15 and 22 as being allegedly obvious under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Downing in view of Gondar, and U.S. Patent 6,563,250 to Mathur. These rejection are rendered moot by the incorporation of the allowable features of claim 6 into claims 1, 11 and 12, and by the incorporation of the allowable features of claim 20 into claims 14 and 21. Consequently, all the claims are in condition for allowance. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103 be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further is desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Gerhard W. Thielman
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Date: December 6, 2005

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